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(NOTE: PDF of letter is attached)

CARDIN, MIKULSKI CALL FOR FCC TO CONSIDER “IN-STATE” TV BROADCASTS FOR GARRETT COUNTY

WASHINGTON – **U.S. Ben Cardin** and **Barbara A. Mikulski** (both D-MD) have sent a letter to the Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission urging the agency to come up with a “common sense” solution that will allow residents of Garrett County to receive “in-state” TV broadcasts. Currently, Garrett County is considered part of the Pittsburgh, PA media market and receives Pennsylvania news, sports and other programming.

Below is test of the letter sent by Senators Cardin and Mikulski to Julius Genachowski, Chairman of the FCC:

Dear Chairman Genachowski:

We would like to offer the following comments to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) regarding in-state broadcasts, required under Section 304 of the Satellite Television Extension and Localism Act of 2010. Garrett County in Western Maryland is one of the many 'orphan counties' in our nation whose residents are affected by the disparities between state boundaries and designated market areas, and thus are unable to receive commercial in-state broadcasts.

This issue was first brought to our attention by Garrett County residents and local elected officials who are understandably upset because of their longstanding lack of television access to the news, politics, sports, cultural events, and emergency notifications pertaining to their own state. We support their view and are committed to securing access to Maryland-licensed broadcasting for Garrett County. As citizens of Maryland, it is appropriate that the residents of Garrett County enjoy appropriate access to the programming carried by Maryland-based stations.

We urge the FCC to take action to address the situation currently affecting the people of Garrett County. We consider it a form of disenfranchisement that the residents of Garrett County find themselves better informed about the laws, issues, and candidates of Pennsylvania than those in Maryland. The upcoming report on in-state broadcast programming offers the FCC an opportunity to put forth a common-sense solution for addressing this problem, not only for our

constituents in Garrett County but for residents in many counties across the country experiencing a similar disconnection from their home state.

Therefore, we strongly hope the FCC to use the upcoming report as the first positive step towards fixing an important problem. Thank you for the opportunity to extend our comments regarding this report. We look forward to working with the Commission to reach a favorable resolution.

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